

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUCAR 00271 221514Z

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ACTION CU-04

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FM*AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, RO

SUBJECT: EXCHANGES - ROMANIAN PARTICIPATION LINCOLN
CENTER CHORAL FESTIVAL

REF: STATE 011935

1. CONTENTS REFTEL DISCUSSED INFORMALLY WITH MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION JANUARY 19 AND COMMUNICATED OFFICIALLY BY LETTER
JANUARY 22. EMBASSY HAS EXPLAINED REASON FOR CHARTER CANCEL-
LATION AND RECOMMENDED THAT MINISTRY SEEK ACCESS TO FAVORABLE
MALEV RATES. (LOCAL AIRLINE--TAROM--HAS NO U.S. ROUTE AT THIS
TIME.)

2. MINISTRY CONTACT FAMILIAR WITH HISTORY ROMANIAN DECISION-
MAKING THIS MATTER COMMENTED THAT "UNFORTUNATE" CANCELLATION
WAS "EXTREMELY REGRATTABLE". IT SEEMS CLEAR TO EMBASSY THAT,
DESPITE INTEREST HERE, ROMANIANS WILL BE UNABLE TO PARTICIPATE
IF REQUIRED TO FUND TRAVEL AT STANDARD COMMERCIAL ECONOMY FARES.

3. AS REPORTED BUCHAREST 4268, DECISION REGARDING ROMANIAN
PARTICIPATION ORIGINALLY MADE AT PARTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING NOVEMBER 14. AT THAT TIME, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION WAS
INSTRUCTED TO SET ASIDE NECESSARY FUNDS (APPROXIMATELY \$5,600)

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FOR TRAVEL COSTS OF GROUP OF FORTY BASED ON CHARTER RATE.

MINISTER OF EDUCATION NICULESCU-MIZIL PERSONALLY HANDLING
THIS MATTER FOR THE MINISTRY.

4. IN EMBASSY VIEW, THE PRESENT SITUATION IS BEGINING TO
ASSUME A CERTAIN SIGNIFICANCE WHOSE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON
ATTITUDES TOWARD U.S.-ROMANIAN BILATERAL CULTURAL RELATIONS NEEDS
TO BE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED. IN LIGHT OF THE IMPORTANCE THAT
ROMANIANS ATTACH TO THEIR SENSE OF CULTURAL "RECIPROCITY" AND
IN VIEW OF THE LEVEL OF OFFICIAL ROMANIAN ATTENTION TO THIS
MATTER, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT IT IS OF SOME IMPORTANCE
THAT THE U.S. SIDE DEMONSTRATE A WILLINGNESS TO ATTEMPT TO
ASSIST IN THE RESOLUTION OF THE TRAVEL PROBLEM, REGARDLESS OF
THE EVENTUAL OUTCOME.

5. IF THE DEPARTMENT CONCURS, THE EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE
THAT BJORGE AND LINCOLN CENTER BE REQUESTED TO SURVEY WHAT
OTHER POSSIBLE CHARTER OPTIONS FROM PARIS EXIST TO TRANSPORT
ROMANIAN PARTICIPANTS. IN ADDITION, HARRY MORGAN'S CONTACTS
WITH CZECHOSLOVAKIAN AIRLINES AND OTHER COMPANIES MAY REPRESENT
A POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO THE PRESENT IMPASSE. THE EMBASSY WOULD
LIKE TO BE ABLE TO REPORT THE FULLEST POSSIBLE CONSIDERATION
OF THE MATTER TO THE MINISTRY FOR NICULESCU-MIZIL.

6. APPRECIATE EARLY REPLY.
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